

## AN APPEAL AGAINST THE WALL, October 24 2003

We demand that Sweden assumes responsibility and acts forcefully to stop the Israeli offensive in Rafah on the Gaza strip and on the West Bank. We demand that the UN's decrees regarding human rights are complied with and that the illegal occupation, according to civil rights, of Palestine ends. The situation in Rafah is urgent with an imminent risk that Rafah will be a new Jenin. The Swedish government can not be passive facing this serious challenge to the international community and the possibility of peace in the Middle East.

According to reliable sources, the invasion, in progress since October 6th, is the largest in three years.<sup>1</sup> The sources states that during the last weeks 60 tanks, accompanied by an unknown number of Apache helicopters, has entered Rafah. They have demolished another 160 homes (besides the 600 that already has been demolished since the intifada started three years ago) and in Rafah only, about 2000 people have become homeless in the last two weeks. Missiles have been fired into densely populated areas on the Gaza Strip. 35 people have been killed and more than 240 wounded. The secretary-general of the United Nations, Kofi

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<sup>1</sup> Our information originates from reports from several international peace organisations working over boundaries, among others Haaretz, [www.haaretz.com](http://www.haaretz.com), Gush Shalom (Israeli Peace Bloc), [www.gush-shalom.org/english](http://www.gush-shalom.org/english), the Palestine Monitor, [www.palestinemonitor.org](http://www.palestinemonitor.org), Palestine News Network, [www.palestinenet.org/english](http://www.palestinenet.org/english), Bat Shalom (women for peace in Israel), and more.

Annan, recently described the invasion of Rafah as an "outrage" against the civilian population.

At present, Israel has completed 145 km of a wall that will be 650 km in total, and twice as high as the former Berlin wall. In many places, the wall is built on Palestinian territory. Another wall is also built in Rafah, the Gaza Strip's border to Egypt. To make room for the wall, Israel demolishes Palestinian homes on a daily basis. A family most of the time does not get more than ten minutes to leave their home before the bulldozers starts to pull it down.

The American woman Rachel Corrie was the first international peace activist to be killed by such an Israeli bulldozer. Today her parents call for an American investigation into Rachel's death. Israel has exonerated the driver from responsibility and classified Rachel's death as an unfortunate accident. She was one of the hundreds of thousands of youths that today demands that human rights will be prioritized to prevent a "cold war" between the USA and the Arab States.

We demand that our government immediately takes a more active part of the work bringing about peace between Israel and Palestine. We demand that the government of Sweden takes sides against the wall that is being erected around the occupied Palestinian territories,

that the construction of the wall is stopped immediately and that the wall that has been built so far will be torn down. A wall which purpose is to encircle a group of people can never work for a peace dialogue. Sweden's voice is needed, not only to have an influence on world opinion, but also to set a distinct position for the efforts to bring about peace in both Palestine and Israel.

As of yet, no one knows how many civilians that was shot dead or buried under the demolished homes in Jenin. The inspectors of the United Nations, who had suggested an independent investigation, were, by the Israeli government, banned from entering. Do not let this happen in Rafah too!

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